

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for item selection comprising the steps of:
  - displaying a helical surface having an axis;
  - providing a plurality of items on said helical surface; and
  - selecting one of said plurality of items.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein said plurality of items includes at least one of:  
media items, software applications and features associated with a software application.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein said step of displaying a helical surface further comprises the step of:
  - displaying said helical surface with said axis oriented substantially  
perpendicular to a plane associated with a display screen.
4. The method of claim 3, further comprising the step of:
  - tilting said axis of said helical surface by a predetermined tilt angle relative to  
perpendicular to said plane associated with said display screen.
5. The method of claim 4, wherein said predetermined tilt angle is within the range  
of 30-60 degrees.
6. The method of claim 1, wherein said step of providing a plurality of items on said  
helical surface further comprises the step of:

allocating a portion of said helical surface to each of said plurality of items.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein said portion is wedge-shaped.

8. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:

clipping from view items on said helical surface which are above a clipping plane.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein said step of displaying further comprises the step of:

displaying said helical surface with said axis oriented substantially parallel to a plane associated with a display screen.

10. The method of claim 9, further comprising the step of:

displaying a plurality of category labels along said helical surface which identify groups of said plurality of items.

11. The method of claim 3, further comprising the step of:

changing a view of said helical surface such that it is displayed with said axis oriented substantially parallel to said plane associated with said display screen.

12. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:

scrolling through said plurality of items using a pointing device.

13. A user interface comprising:

a helical surface having an axis;

a plurality of items displayed on said helical surface; and

means for selecting one of said plurality of items.

14. The user interface of claim 13, wherein said plurality of items includes at least one of: media items, software applications and features associated with a software application.

15. The user interface of claim 13, wherein said axis is oriented substantially perpendicular to a plane associated with a display screen.

16. The user interface of claim 15, wherein said axis of is tilted by a predetermined tilt angle relative to perpendicular to said plane associated with said display screen.

17. The user interface of claim 16, wherein said predetermined tilt angle is within the range of 30-60 degrees.

18. The user interface of claim 13, wherein each of said plurality of items displayed on said helical surface is allocated to a predetermined portion thereof.

19. The user interface of claim 18, wherein said portion is wedge-shaped.

20. The user interface of claim 13, further comprising:  
means for clipping from view items on said helical surface which are above a clipping plane.

21. The user interface of claim 13, wherein said axis is oriented substantially parallel to a plane associated with a display screen.

22. The user interface of claim 21, further comprising a plurality of category labels along said helical surface which identify groups of said plurality of items.

23. The user interface of claim 15, further comprising:  
means for changing a view of said helical surface such that it is displayed with said axis oriented substantially parallel to said plane associated with said display screen.

24. The user interface of claim 13, further comprising:  
means for scrolling through said plurality of items using a pointing device.

25. The method of claim 1, wherein said helical surface comprises an outer helix, an inner helix and a surface therebetween.

26. The method of claim 25, wherein said outer helix has a first helical angle associated therewith and said inner helix has a second helical angle associated therewith, said first helical angle being different from said second helical angle.

27. The method of claim 25, wherein said surface is at least partially translucent or transparent.

28. The method of claim 1, wherein said axis is linear.

29. The method of claim 11, further comprising the step of:  
animating a transition between said step of displaying said helical surface with said axis oriented substantially perpendicular to said plane associated with said display screen and said step of changing said view of said helical surface such that it is displayed with said axis oriented substantially parallel to said plane associated with said display screen.

30. The method of claim 25, wherein said outer helix and said inner helix have at least one helical angle associated there with which varies as a function of length of said helical surface.

31. The user interface of claim 13, wherein said helical surface comprises an outer helix, an inner helix and a surface therebetween.

32. The user interface of claim 31, wherein said outer helix has a first helical angle associated therewith and said inner helix has a second helical angle associated therewith, said first helical angle being different from said second helical angle.

33. The user interface of claim 31, wherein said surface is at least partially translucent or transparent.

34. The user interface of claim 13, wherein said axis is linear.

35. The user interface of claim 23, further comprising the step of:  
animating a transition between said step of displaying said helical surface with said axis oriented substantially perpendicular to said plane associated with said display screen and said step of changing said view of said helical surface such that it is displayed with said axis oriented substantially parallel to said plane associated with said display screen.

36. The user interface of claim 31, wherein said outer helix and said inner helix have at least one helical angle associated there with which varies as a function of length of said helical surface.

37. A computer-readable medium containing a program that performs the steps of:  
displaying a helical surface having an axis;  
providing a plurality of items on said helical surface; and  
selecting one of said plurality of items.